

A9 Berriedale Braes

Project newsletter



Local nursery children enjoying their construction play area



Ryan MacLean, Site Agent,
RJ McLeod (Contractors) Ltd

Welcome

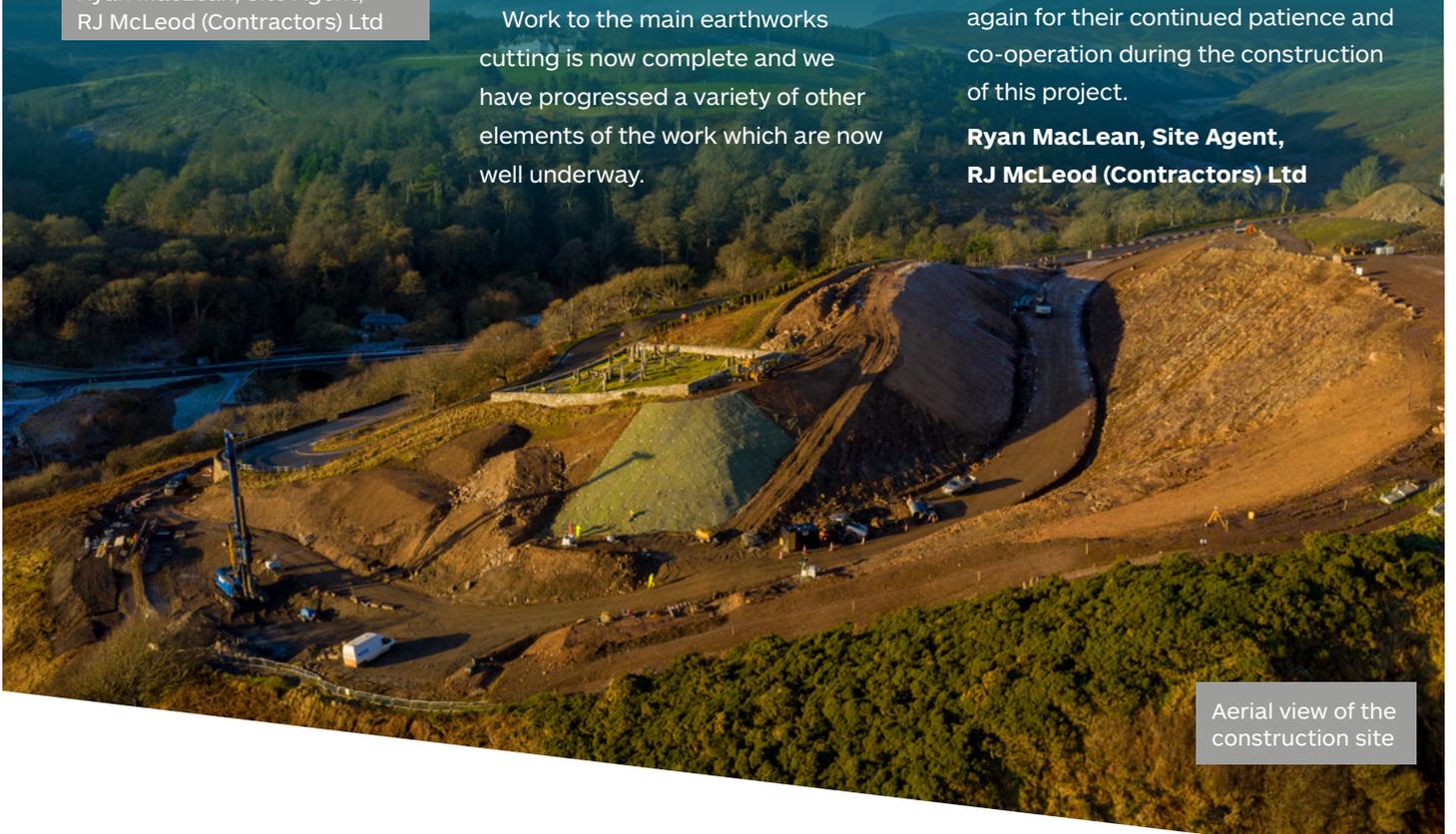
Welcome to the third edition of our **A9 Berriedale Braes project progress newsletter**.

The construction team continued to make good progress in the second half of 2019 and the project is on schedule to open later in Spring 2020.

Work to the main earthworks cutting is now complete and we have progressed a variety of other elements of the work which are now well underway.

Since the new year, we have focused on getting the remainder of the work completed so that road users and the local community can enjoy the benefits that this project will deliver when completed. Finally, I would like to thank the local community once again for their continued patience and co-operation during the construction of this project.

**Ryan MacLean, Site Agent,
RJ McLeod (Contractors) Ltd**



Aerial view of the construction site



Aerial view of Berriedale Braes

Progress update

The main earthworks operation involved the removal of 40,000m³ of rock and 20,000m³ of subsoil. Much of this material has been processed and reused in other areas of the project.

In December 2019, we reached a major milestone for the project when we completed the bored pile retaining wall. The wall is to ensure the long term stability of the road above the steep coastal cliffs. The retaining wall involved the construction of circular concrete piles of up to 14 metres in

EARTHWORKS

length bored into the ground. Four metres of this length is bored into the underlying rock to provide a stable foundation for the construction of the new road.

A concrete capping beam was built on top of the concrete piles in January, with associated ground anchor installation due to be completed soon. The ground anchors help prevent movement of the buried

retaining wall and complete the overall structure.

The drainage works include the construction of a new swale feature. The work started in November 2019 and is due for completion in the spring. The swale is designed to manage surface water run-off from the road and verges, controlling the flow of the water before it outfalls into Berriedale Water.

By the end of 2019, we completed soil nailing to reinforce the steepened slope with long steel bars to prevent any future ground movement of the slope.



Soil nailing

Looking ahead

Works are progressing well and over the next few months the team will be focusing on the following activities:

- Construction of associated ground anchors for the bored pile retaining wall structure
- Construction of the reinforced earthworks wall
- Drainage installation and construction of the swale
- Surfacing operations
- Installation of signs, road markings etc
- Road restraint system
- Landscaping, seeding and planting works.

SCHOOLS

Newton Park Nursery

The project team were delighted to help Newton Park Nursery create an active play construction area for the children to learn and play in.

The children can now work together to build and measure structures, investigate the shape, number and size of the items they are building with, sort and classify the items and create natural patterns.

The items the project team donated included junior hard hats, cones, yellow jackets, pipes and the nursery's very own construction signs.



Construction play area at Newton Park Nursery

School bury time capsule

Twenty-eight pupils and three teachers from Dunbeath Primary School visited the site on 13 December to learn how the Berriedale Braes project is being built.

RJ McLeod invited schoolchildren from Dunbeath Primary School to make a time capsule. Each child contributed towards the contents of the time capsule with something they had made or collected. Once the time capsule was completed, the schoolchildren visited the site to assist RJ McLeod, in burying their time capsule within the construction site of the new road.

A range of items were gathered and put in the time capsule in the

hope of giving future generations a real insight into the life of a pupil today. Some of these items included; hand drawn pictures, photos of themselves, the school and local Dunbeath landmarks.

The children also wrote newspaper reports providing information on topical aspects of life such as the local wildlife and windfarms.

Scott, aged 11 said: "I was excited to go and visit the new road site. It was very high up! It was great to bury the time capsule, I hope it's dug up in one hundred years."

Ms Mee-Shipman, teacher at Dunbeath Primary School said: "We were incredibly excited and proud to be involved in the project. It has offered so many skills and experiences. It was a privilege to be asked to fill and bury the time capsule and upon visiting the site, the children were amazed by the vastness and height of the road. They thoroughly enjoyed the whole experience and we are grateful to the contractor for facilitating this experience."

Schoolchildren with the time capsule



Golspie High School STEM event

STEM school events

Along with the Engineer for the project AECOM, we were delighted to help with the STEM events at Wick High School and Golspie High School on Tuesday 5 and Wednesday 6 November respectively.

The Golspie High School event also involved pupils from Kinlochbervie High School, Ullapool High School and Dornoch Academy.

After an introduction about our company and the Berriedale Braes project, the pupils were asked to take part in some bridge building activities. This let them put their knowledge and creativity to the test, whilst educating about civil engineering practises. This is the second time that we have been involved in this event, which is organised by the Caithness Chamber of Commerce as part of its 'Developing the Young Workforce' activity.

Ryan MacLean, RJ McLeod said: "It was a pleasure to be involved in another STEM event with a number of different schools. We are keen to encourage STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) learning and hopefully the event will inspire some future civil engineers."



Monthly charity donation

We take the health and safety of our workforce and members of the general public very seriously. For each month worked without an incident which causes working time to be lost, RJ McLeod makes a financial donation to a local charity or good cause.

Members of the workforce choose the charity they wish to benefit from this initiative. In recent months organisations we have donated to included When you Wish Upon a Star, Active Kids, Helmsdale Primary School and Lybster Primary School.

Lybster Primary School
Lybster
KW3 6BJ
10.12.19
Dear RJ McLeod
Thank you for giving us £100 towards our school. We used it for a bus to timespan. We learnt about the highland clearances.

Love from
Will



It's great to see how the donations we make are helping our chosen charities, and we were delighted to receive these letters from the children at Lybster Primary School.

Lybster Primary School
Lybster
KW3 6BJ
10.12.19

Dear RJ McLeod,
Thank you for giving us £100 towards our school. We used it for a bus to timespan. We learnt about the highland clearances. I liked going to timespan.
Love from
Alice

Lybster Primary School
Lybster
KW3 6BJ
10.12.19

Dear RJ McLeod
Thank you for giving us £100 towards our school. We used it for a bus to timespan. We learnt about the highland clearances. We learnt lots of things.
Love from
Mhairi

ABOUT THE CHARITY DONATIONS

- **When you Wish Upon a Star:** A Dornoch resident is trekking 70 miles into the Arctic Circle to raise money for the charity
- **Active Kids Caithness:** A group dedicated to raising money for local charities
- **Helmsdale Primary School:** Raising money to pay for a bus for a school trip to the pantomime
- **Lybster Primary School:** Raising money for school Christmas events
- **Dunbeath Nursery:** To provide resources for the benefit of the children.

Considerate constructors

The site is pleased to be registered with the Considerate Constructors Scheme (ccscheme.org.uk).

The scheme provides contractors with a Code of Considerate Practice which has been developed to encourage best practice that goes beyond statutory construction industry requirements.



GOOD NEIGHBOURS



Installing stone steps

JOHN O' GROATS WALKING TRAIL

■ In late 2019, we carried out some restoration work to the John O'Groats walking trail along a steep section of the track which is adjacent to the site. Improvements have included clearance of shrubs and installing some stone steps to make it easier to walk uphill in that section.

OUSDALE BROCH

■ In October 2019, we upgraded an existing lay-by by improving the road surface using tar planings and by the addition of some parking spaces. This was carried out as part of the Caithness Broch Project, and specifically for Ousdale Broch.

FURTHER PROJECT INFORMATION

■ For more information on the project please visit:

transport.gov.scot/projects/a9-berriedale-braes-improvement-scheme

